

1968 HAWK WATCH AT MT. PETER

STEPHEN F. BAILEY

September 1968, our tenth at Mt. Peter, was our biggest September ever. In only 18 days of observation, less than some other years, we counted 6645 Broad-wings and 7182 total hawks, both counts new records by a big margin. The Quarry in Upper Montclair also did well with 6903 Broad-wings and 8031 total hawks through the 29th, in 23 days of observation. Reports have reached us that Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania broke its record for August-September. However, it must be remembered that Hawk Mountain has continuous coverage from late August on and, since last year, *two* lookouts in operation. Montclair also has more observers per day than Mt. Peter. Experience proves repeatedly that the more observers the more hawks are seen. Our high counts also reflect the fact that our more experienced watchers have learned to look, and binocular-scan, in all directions (yes-including south) from the horizon to the zenith for Broad-wings. Although some Broad-wings and most other hawks (especially in October and November) fly fairly low and along the ridge, many Broad-wings go uncounted because they are so high and/or fly across or parallel to the ridge, missing the lookout. Thus, with more and better coverage, our records should be surpassed.

After a weather disturbance, September 12th began 2 weeks of uninterrupted fair and mild weather. Nearly all Broad-wings migrated during this period. Our 671 on the 12th included 86 Sparrow Hawks, our only good flight of this species in the month. On the 15th a light northeast wind brought 2962 hawks over Mt. Peter, eclipsing our old single-day record of 2444. The 16th produced 1628 (our third biggest day ever) and the 17th 1049. By the 18th smog reached us and it probably contributed to the cessation of the Broad-wing flight. A temperature inversion with smog is, after rain, the worst flight weather, as thermals and wind are absent. The northeast wind is excellent at Mt. Peter because, a tailwind, it helps Broad-wings in gliding from thermal to thermal. Many Broad-wings were observed very low on the 15th and 16th between 5 and 6 P.M., and on the 16th and 17th around 10 A.M., because kettles of them, their flight interrupted by night, settled into the woods nearby.

Counts of most other species were good, but Sparrow Hawks, booming in recent years, proved quite disappointing in September. 3 Peregrines and 1 Pigeon Hawk, all on the 21st, were encouraging, however.

After our record September count, October and November were somewhat anticlimactic. Good weather was, for the most part, timed against us. After a good beginning weekend, the hawking during our 17 day continuous watch in October (our longest ever at this time) became very dull during almost 2 weeks of variable and thoroughly unfavorable

weather. It is a pity that our first 2 week October watch coincided so closely with this extended period of bad weather. Finally, on the 19th, a low-pressure system associated with Hurricane Gladys passed through and produced another worthwhile flight. Although our leaders were not instructed to record other (non-raptor) interesting migrants (waterfowl, winter finches, etc.) and thus our records are far from complete, Purple Finches and Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen throughout this period. Gulls seemed more common this year, being seen in "kettles" of up to 25 or more. Canada Geese were recorded in this period: 302 on the 5th, 170 on the 6th, 460 on the 7th, 600 on the 8th, 40 on the 10th, 75 on the 13th, 29 with 3 ducks mixed right in with the formation on the 20th, 604 on the 21st. The waterfowl highlight had to be the 8 *Whistling Swans* on the 8th. A few loons were seen, and 5 Water Pipits bounced overhead on the 7th. Although we do not count Turkey Vultures as migrant raptors (and watchers at other lookouts are gradually ceasing to count them), in October and November (*not* in September) *obviously* migrating "T.V.'s" may be seen. This year *obviously* migrating T.V.'s were noted as follows: 22 on the 7th, 5 on the 20th, 11 on the 21st.

After this period, scheduled coverage was limited to the next 4 weekends. However, all but 2 of these 8 days were rained out. The best flights at Hawk Mountain were almost entirely on weekdays. However, October 27 proved very rewarding. It produced a late Pigeon Hawk and our first Golden Eagle, a fully adult bird which circled for a while up the ridge before sailing directly overhead at a moderate altitude. Incidentally, this eagle showed light shoulders above, a mark I have since noted on other Golden Eagles elsewhere. Most of the 89 hawks passed and/or circled very low near the lookout, especially the Red-shoulders—excellent views. Our day's count of 22 was our second-best ever for this species. Other birds on the 27th: 3 migrating T.V.'s, 187 Canada Geese, 360 Brant, 100 Evening Grosbeaks (the first of this flight year), 12 Purple finches, 1 Pine Siskin, and 1 Greater (?) Yellowlegs. On November 2nd, mild weather held the count at 53 hawks and 150 Evening Grosbeaks. It is, again, unfortunate that rain ruined our November weekends; this was a Goshawk flight year. We'll never know how many Goshawks passed Mt. Peter on weekdays from late October on. There were certainly many good migration days. Despite our weather problems in October and November, however, quick glances at the statistics for our good days and at our season totals reveal 1968 as our best year in the ten-year history of our count. It should be noted, however, that this does not indicate that more hawks passed Mt. Peter, only that we *saw* more.

194 West Ridgewood Ave., Ridgewood, N.J. 07450

(Mt. Peter is located near the New York-New Jersey border and the hawk watch is conducted by the Fyke Nature Association of Ramsey, New Jersey. An article on Mt. Peter appeared in *The Kingbird* for July, 1967. Ed.)

MT. PETER 1968 DAILY HAWK COUNT

The number of hours of observation is listed for each day, as is the number of observers. Totals are given for September, 1968 and for the preceding nine Septembers; for October-

November 1968 and for the preceding 3 October-November periods; and for the total season 1965-1968.

Date	Gos	SsH	CH	RtH	RsH	BwH	RIH	BE	GE	MH	Os	Per	Pig	SpH	Uni	Total	Hrs	Obs
9/7	-	-	-	1	-	33	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	4	43	8	3
9/8	-	-	-	2	-	57	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	7	5	74	7	8
9/9	-	-	1	3	-	33	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	41	7½	2
9/10	-	4	-	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	13	7	4
9/11	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	9	3	16	4	3
9/12	-	1	-	2	-	575	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	86	1	671	8	12
9/13	-	4	-	2	2	189	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	29	3	234	10	4
9/14	-	8	1	4	-	39	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	4	10	72	8½	2
9/15	-	3	-	1	-	2928	-	-	-	-	24	-	-	3	3	2962	9½	12
9/16	-	5	1	1	1	1608	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	7	1	1628	10	3
9/17	-	7	4	-	-	1030	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	2	1049	8	7
9/18	-	11	-	-	3	60	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	8	-	85	8	8
9/19	-	5	-	7	2	68	-	-	-	4	5	-	-	14	3	108	8	8
9/20	-	-	-	-	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	13	8	5
9/21	-	7	1	4	-	8	-	-	-	2	1	3	1	5	6	38	10	17
9/22	-	3	-	3	-	8	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	32	13	76	8	10
9/28	-	8	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	7	3	26	7	11
9/29	-	8	1	5	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	12	5	34	6	6
Total	-	85	11	43	12	6645	-	-	-	26	56	3	1	235	66	7183	142	
1967	-	33	4	43	6	756	-	-	-	18	30	-	-	130	43	1063	127	
1966	-	29	7	18	1	1321	-	-	-	18	46	-	-	280	22	1743	114	
1965	-	162	21	37	9	1508	-	-	-	30	128	3	2	401	69	2370	137	
1964	-	116	12	19	-	3489	-	4	-	16	86	-	-	101	48	3891	126	
1963	-	62	7	19	2	1428	-	-	-	29	31	-	2	199	74	1852	134	
1962	-	44	8	8	12	3701	-	-	-	16	58	3	1	157	32	4030	142	
1961	-	37	5	29	5	1113	-	1	-	23	12	1	2	68	38	1347		
1960	-	61	2	9	-	1293	-	1	-	8	24	-	-	55	70	1528		
1959	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1781		

10/5	-	40	2	14	1	6	-	-	-	5	10	1	1	43	4	127	9	5
10/6	-	76	-	10	2	2	-	-	-	1	6	-	-	5	11	113	7	4
10/7	-	19	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	28	4	2
10/8	-	2	1	1	-	3	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	2	3	15	8	6
10/9	-	3	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	4	21	7	8
10/10	-	4	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	1	27	8	2
10/11														Rain				
10/12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	4	1
10/13	-	7	1	7	2	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	6	26	8	4
10/14	-	28	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	6	1	45	6	2
10/15	-	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	7	3	4
10/16	-	6	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	14	4½	4
10/17	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	3	19	4	1
10/18	-	13	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	5	3	28	8	6
10/19														Rain				
10/20	-	9	-	61	11	-	-	-	-	5	1	-	-	5	9	101	8	13
10/21	-	6	1	42	6	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	5	5	68	6	3
10/26	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	6	11	2	1
10/27	-	12	-	45	22	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	1	-	3	89	10	7
10/31	-	-	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	3	1
11/2	-	3	-	41	5	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	53	7	3
11/3														Rain				
11/9														Not Covered				
11/10														Snow and Rain				
11/16														Rain				
Total	-	244	7	269	50	13	-	-	1	32	24	1	3	98	62	803	116½	
1967	1	127	2	108	7	61	1	-	-	15	10	4	5	134	62	537	74½	
1966	1	135	18	195	43	72	-	-	-	21	14	1	3	258	26	787	83	
1965	-	206	18	161	53	24	-	1	-	36	17	1	1	72	65	644		
SEASON TOTALS (August–November)																		
1968	-	329	18	312	62	6658	-	-	1	58	80	4	4	333	128	7986	258½	
1967	1	160	6	151	13	817	1	-	-	33	40	4	5	264	105	1600	201	
1966	1	164	25	213	44	1393	-	-	-	39	60	1	3	538	48	2530	197	
1965	-	368	39	198	62	1532	-	1	-	66	145	4	3	473	134	3025	202	

REPORTS FOR NEST-RECORD CARD PROGRAM

We would once again like to remind contributors (old and new) to return their completed cards to the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850, or to their nearest Regional Center (complete listing in *Audubon Field Notes*). We are also interested in records from previous years, and if anyone has extensive notes from earlier years, we are willing to undertake the task of transferring the data.

During the past few months considerable progress has been made in editing and punching data and writing computer programs for analysis of data. Any serious worker interested in using the material should contact the Director of the program, Dr. David B. Peakall at the Laboratory of Ornithology.

ADVERTISING

All our members are reminded that *The Kingbird* welcomes advertising. We urge you to consider possible advertisers and turn their names over to the Circulation Manager, Dr. Frederick C. Dittrich, 20 Drumlin Terrace, Syracuse. Your cooperation will be most appreciated.

PATCHES

A recent article in the New York State Conservationist Magazine offered a salute to conservationists. The article consisting of a double page photo of club emblems had this to say "Club patches are a colorful sight. We offer this picture of New York emblems as a salute to all conservation and sportsmen groups, for without their constructive works, progress in the field of conservation (soil, water, forest, and wildlife) would be more deplorable than it is today!"

The only error in this article is one of omission, for without exception the patches represented Rod and Gun, Archery, Target or general sportsmen's clubs, not one member club of the N.Y.S.F.B.C. could be found among them.

In an effort to expose the readership of that journal to the opposite side of the coin I am asking your co-operation in obtaining club patches, not only those of you whose clubs are members of the Federation but also those who are individual members or those who know of local clubs not specifically sport oriented that have patches.

Please forward patches or car stickers to me as soon as possible for inclusions in a future article in the Conservationist.

Jerome Kerner, Hastings Drive, Grahamsville, New York 12240